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ABSTRACT

This curriculum is designed to introduce students to the issues of world hunger and children's rights. The curriculum includes more than enough material for two hour-long lessons. Each lesson can stand on its own; however, the interrelated nature of the topics lends itself to presenting both parts of the packet. If time is limited, suggestions are provided in each lesson regarding which sub-sections might be combined to create shorter lessons. Cross-references are made from one unit to the other. The lessons include: (1) "Children and Hunger"; (2) "Children and Justice"; (3) "Students CAN Make a Difference"; and (4) "Additional Resources." The purpose of the lessons is to promote awareness and social action for positive change. The teacher's role in encouraging proactive responses will help empower children to action. It is this action, not guilt, that the curriculum strives to foster. (EH)

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ED 415 142

# Children Hungering For Justice

## Curriculum on Hunger and Children's Rights
## Grades 9-12

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# World Food Day

World Food Day was created by the member nations of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Now observed in more than 140 countries, the day's purpose is to focus attention on all food and farm problems, and to get the people of the world more directly involved in the search for solutions. It is sponsored jointly by FAO, each national government, and the private voluntary community. But the experience of the first ten years shows clearly that the success of World Food Day, in each country, has come through grassroots action.

In the U.S., the National Committee for World Food Day is sponsored this year by more than 350 private voluntary organizations. A variety of educational and information materials for World Food Day are produced by FAO, governments, and national World Food Day committees. This material—study papers, fact sheets, posters—is available on request at no cost in most cases. It is designed to help promote World Food Day events and to help people better understand food and hunger issues.

**For more information please write:**

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# Introduction for Teachers

This curriculum is designed to introduce students to the issues of world hunger and children's rights. The curriculum seeks to support World Food Day activities and to educate about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The curriculum includes more than enough material for two hour long lessons. Each lesson can stand on its own; however, the interrelated nature of the topics lends itself to presenting both parts of the packet. If time is limited, suggestions are provided in each lesson regarding which sub-sections might be combined to create shorter lessons. Cross-references are made from one unit to the other.

Another way to bring these issues to life for your students is through the use of audio-visuals. In the **Resource Section** we suggest a few titles for your consideration. These can be excellent supplements for the material presented--and they are free.

When faced with the magnitude of the problems that confront adults and children alike in today's world, it is vital to promote action, not passivity. The teacher's role in encouraging proactive responses, even among the youngest students, will help empower children to action. It is this action, not guilt, that the curriculum strives to foster. Finally, while seeking to educate children about issues of hunger and justice, it is imperative that teachers be sensitive to the fact that some of their students may themselves be malnourished or be experiencing abuse.

**Note regarding terminology**: Various terms are used to group countries according to economic development. Most terms are based upon a Western, capitalist notion of economic achievement, e.g.: First World, Second World, Third World; Industrialized World, Developing World; Developed Nations, Developing Nations, Underdeveloped Nations; Modern World, Ancient World. More recently, the terms North and South have been offered as a less value ladened way of grouping countries. Recognizing the inherent difficulty of any label, this curriculum chooses to use the terms Developed Nations and Developing Nations to represent the basic global distribution of wealth and rights. Teachers and students should keep in mind, however, that vast economic disparities exist within countries as well as between countries.

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*"We are guilty of many errors and many faults but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many things can wait, the children cannot. Right now is the time their bones are being formed, their senses are being developed. To them we cannot answer 'tomorrow,' their name is 'today.'"*
—Gabriela Mistral

# Part One: Children and Hunger

**Teacher's note:** The activities included in this unit are more than enough to fill a typical class period. You may wish to select from among the activities to create your curriculum on world hunger. With minor adjustments, each sub-section could be used by itself. However, some possible combinations are:

Sections II, IIIA, IV, VI (approximately 45 minutes)
Sections II, IIIB, V, VI (approximately 45 minutes)
Sections I, IIIB, IV, VI (approximately 45 minutes)

The goal of the curriculum is to channel student awareness, compassion, and creative thought into effective action.

### Objectives

1. To know the extent of the problem of world hunger.
2. To know definitions of "hunger," "undernourishment," "malnourishment," "Developed Nations," and "Developing Nations."
3. To grasp what it means to be hungry.
4. To dispel some of the myths that surround hunger.
5. Through discussion to face some of the value dilemmas of hungry people and reflect on students' feelings regarding those struggles.
6. To understand that students can make a difference, and to know a variety of ways in which they can help.

### Materials:

- 100 peanuts
- Copies of Handouts 1-4 for each student (If an overhead projector is available, you may wish to make and use transparencies.)

> *"From the broader perspective of our common future, ensuring the healthy physical and mental development of children is the most important investment that can be made in the healthy social and economic development of our societies."*
> —State of the World's Children, 1990, UNICEF

# Lesson Plan: Children and Hunger

## I. Definitions of Hunger:

**A.** Ask students to visualize times when they have been hungry. (**Note**: Be sensitive to the fact that some of your students may not be getting enough to eat.)

*How did they feel?*
*How did they act?*
*How did they think?*
*Was it long-term or short-term hunger?*

**B.** Write three words on the board:

*Hunger*
*Undernourishment*
*Malnourishment*

Divide the students into groups of 4 or 5 and ask them to spend a few minutes defining each term and differentiating each from the others.

After several minutes, for each term, ask which group thinks that they have come up with a definitive definition. Have that group read its definition aloud. Have the rest of the class "edit" it until the class is satisfied with the result. Write the definition on the board next to the term.

Read out the definitions listed below. Amend the definitions on the board as necessary, explaining critical differences.

**Hunger**–a compelling need or desire for food; the painful sensation or state of weakness caused by the need for food; a shortage of food. ***Note:*** It is generally accepted that there are 1 billion hungry people in the world of whom 2/3 are children.

**Undernourishment**–consumption of inadequate amounts of calories and proteins (usually over a long period of time). ***Note:*** Undernourished mothers tend to give birth to low birth weight babies. Such babies stand a much greater chance of dying before their first birthday.

**Malnourishment**–deficiency of certain nutrients, e.g. iron, vitamins A and C, and iodine, which are essential for good health. ***Note:*** Each year, 250,000 children lose their sight for the lack of a small amount of vitamin A in their diet.

*[The State of the World's Children 1990. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.]*

**C.** If you have planned this lesson in conjunction with World Food Day (October 16), explain to them that on this day, students from over 140 countries (all members of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) will be studying the problems of food and hunger.

## II. Dimensions of Hunger:

To dramatize the magnitude of the hunger problem, tell students that it is estimated that approximately 1 billion people of the world's approximately 5.2 billion people suffer from chronic or seasonal hunger. Use the figure 1 billion to do the calculations below:

**A.** Estimate the number of M&M's it would take to fill your classroom. There are 27,648 M&M's per cubic foot. For example, 1 billion M&M's would fill two typical classrooms (24' x 41' x 12') and two-thirds of another.

**B.** If you started counting to 1 billion, counting a number each second (give an example), you would be _____ years old when you were finished (31 years plus the student's present age).

**C.** One billion inches equals 15,782 miles, approximately equal to the round trip between Los Angeles and Darwin, Australia (7,835 mi.), or Denver and Hong Kong (7,465 mi.), or New York and Calcutta (7,921 mi.). Use the globe to illustrate this.

## III. The Experience of Hunger:

***Note:*** Select **one** of the following exercises for a one day lesson. You may wish to use the others over a longer period of time.

**A.** ***Poems: "The Arithmetic of Poverty" and "God to a Hungry Child."***

**1)** Divide your class into small groups of 4 or 5 students each. Give each group a copy of **Student Handout #1** and the accompanying questions. Ask each group to spend a few minutes reading "The

Arithmetic of Poverty" and thoughtfully answering the questions.

2) After several minutes, reconvene the class and invite each group to share what they discussed. Point out the following information:

a) Children are the principle form of old age social security for parents in the developing world.

b) Having many children can appear to be wise planning when infant mortality rates (IMR) are high. When poverty diminishes, population growth rates go down, IMR falls, agricultural self-sufficiency rises, then other forms of old age security can emerge.

3) Now ask the groups to read "God to a Hungry Child" and to answer thoughtfully the questions that follow the poem.

Reconvene the class and share answers. ***Note:*** This poem presents a political view that may be controversial. Point out to the students that this is one particular view and that while they need not agree with it, they should understand the logic and feeling behind it.

**B.** ***Distribution of Wealth and Population Simulation.***

1) Assign an appropriate number of students to represent each region (see chart below) and ask them to stand together. Blatantly count out the number of peanuts that represents the distribution of wealth and hand those peanuts to the group. (The example used is based on a class of 35. Use proportions adjusted to your class size.)

| Regions | Number of Students* | Number of Peanuts** |
|---|---|---|
| Asia | 20 (58%) | 18 |
| Africa | 4 (11%) | 3 |
| US and Canada | 2 (5%) | 29 |
| Latin America and Caribbean | 3 (8%) | 5 |
| Europe and USSR | 6 (17%) | 45 |

**Based on share of world population*
***Based on Gross National Product (GNP)*
*(From Sivard, Ruth Leger. World Military and Social Expenditures 1989, 13th edition. Washington, D.C.: World Priorities. 1989.)*

2) Ask the following questions:

- *How many students have no peanuts?*
- *How many students have 1 peanut?*
- *How many students have 2 peanuts?*
- *How many students have more that 5 peanuts?*
- *How many students have more that 10 peanuts?*

3) Have the students remain with their regions as you pose the following questions:

a) Is the global distribution of wealth fair? Why/Why not?
b) What is meant by "fair" or "just"? Who determines what is "fair" or "just"?
c) Should the distribution of wealth be changed? If so, how?
d) Have you ever experienced a similar situation where something was distributed so unevenly? How did you feel? What did you do?
e) Is the wealth distributed evenly in you local community? How does it compare with the global distribution of wealth?

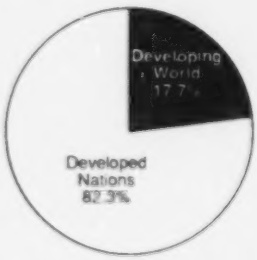
***Note:*** There may be some requests or even demands for the wealthier nations to share their bounty. Discuss ways in which this has taken place to a limited degree through aid programs and loans. Point out that such efforts have their own dilemmas as the debt crisis illustrates.

## IV. Geography of Hunger:

**A.** Distribute copies of **Handout #2**. Draw the following pie graphs on the board:

World Population

World Income




*Source:* Adapted from *Franz, Del.* Exploring the Third World: Development in Africa, Asia and Latin America. *New York: The American Forum, 1987. Sivard,*

*Ruth Leger.* World Military and Social Expenditures 1989. *Washington D.C.: World Priorities, 1989.*

**B.** Explain that countries are grouped according to the distribution of wealth and that for the purposes of this class we will call them Developed Nations and Developing Nations. Point out which are which on the map.

**C.** Guide student observations with the following questions:

**1)** Where are most of the developing countries located? Developed countries?

**2)** Consider carefully the developing countries. What characteristics do they share in common? (Urge students to consider historical circumstances–most were colonies; climate similarities–most have harsh climates, arid or tropical rainforests, etc.; and any others that they may come up with.)

**3)** Consider carefully the developed countries. What characteristics do they share in common? (Most were colonial powers, most are predominantly white, most follow Western European traditions.)

**D.** Ask students to reflect upon the terms used to describe the distribution of wealth in the world:

- *First World, Second World, Third World*
- *Developed, Developing*
- *Industrialized, Traditional, Newly Industrialized*

What intrinsic value is being placed when we choose to use such terms? What does the word "development" mean? Whose definition of "development" is used? Does that help us understand better the distribution of wealth in the world? Is the United States a developed country? Is all of the United States a developed country? What do the environmental threats of toxic pollution, greenhouse effect, etc. say about the nature and viability of our "development"?

### V. Roots of Hunger:

**A.** Ask students to brainstorm factors which contribute to the presence of hunger in the world. After a reasonable list has been generated and written for all to see, have the students rank the factors and compare them with the list below:

- Absence of political and land reforms in hungry nations which would provide landless peasants with greater control over their lives and greater motivation to increase productivity
- Maintenance of international trade relations which keep many poor nations in positions of economic dependency on the North (e.g. low commodity prices)
- Inadequacy and inappropriateness of some food and development aid given
- Inefficient and misdirected development strategies by the poor nations themselves
- Large military expenditures by some of the developing countries
- Wars
- Destabilizations by external forces
- Absence of international grain storage systems to draw on in times of crisis
- Inadequacy of our knowledge about and our willingness to address the problem before us
- International debt
- Environmental degradation
- Droughts, flooding

**B.** Distribute copies of **Facts**: Hunger: Myths and Realities (**Student Handout #3**) Have students take turns reading the myths aloud or have them read the sheet to themselves silently. Then, pose the following questions:

- Why do hunger myths persist?
- How has the media influenced these myths?
- What damage do the myths wreak?

**C.** Distribute copies of **Handout #4 (Hunger Cycle)** and discuss how hunger can be self-perpetuating. Explain how the long-term effects of hunger can affect society.

### VI. Summary

Ask students to take a few minutes to reflect on what they have learned. You may wish to have this occur in silence or to invite students to speak informally on things that made on impact on them. You may wish to turn to **Part Three: Students *CAN* Make a Difference** to begin to plan what your students can do. You may wish to adopt one or more of the suggestions listed in Part III as a class project.

## The Arithmetic of Poverty

Decide, mother,
who goes without.
Is it Rama, the strongest?
or Baca, the weakest
who may not need it much longer
or perhaps Sita?
who may be expendable.

Decide, mother,
kill a part
of yourself
as you resolve the dilemma.
Decide, mother
decide...
and hate.
—*Appadura (India)*

Source: *Overcoming World Hunger–The Challenge Ahead*, Presidential Commission on World Hunger 1980.

## God to a Hungry Child

Hungry child
I didn't make this world for you.
You didn't buy any stock in my railroad,
You didn't invest in my corporation.
Where are your shares in Standard Oil?
I made the world for the rich
And the will-be-rich
And the have-always-been-rich
Not for you
Hungry child.
—*Langston Hughes (U.S.A.)*

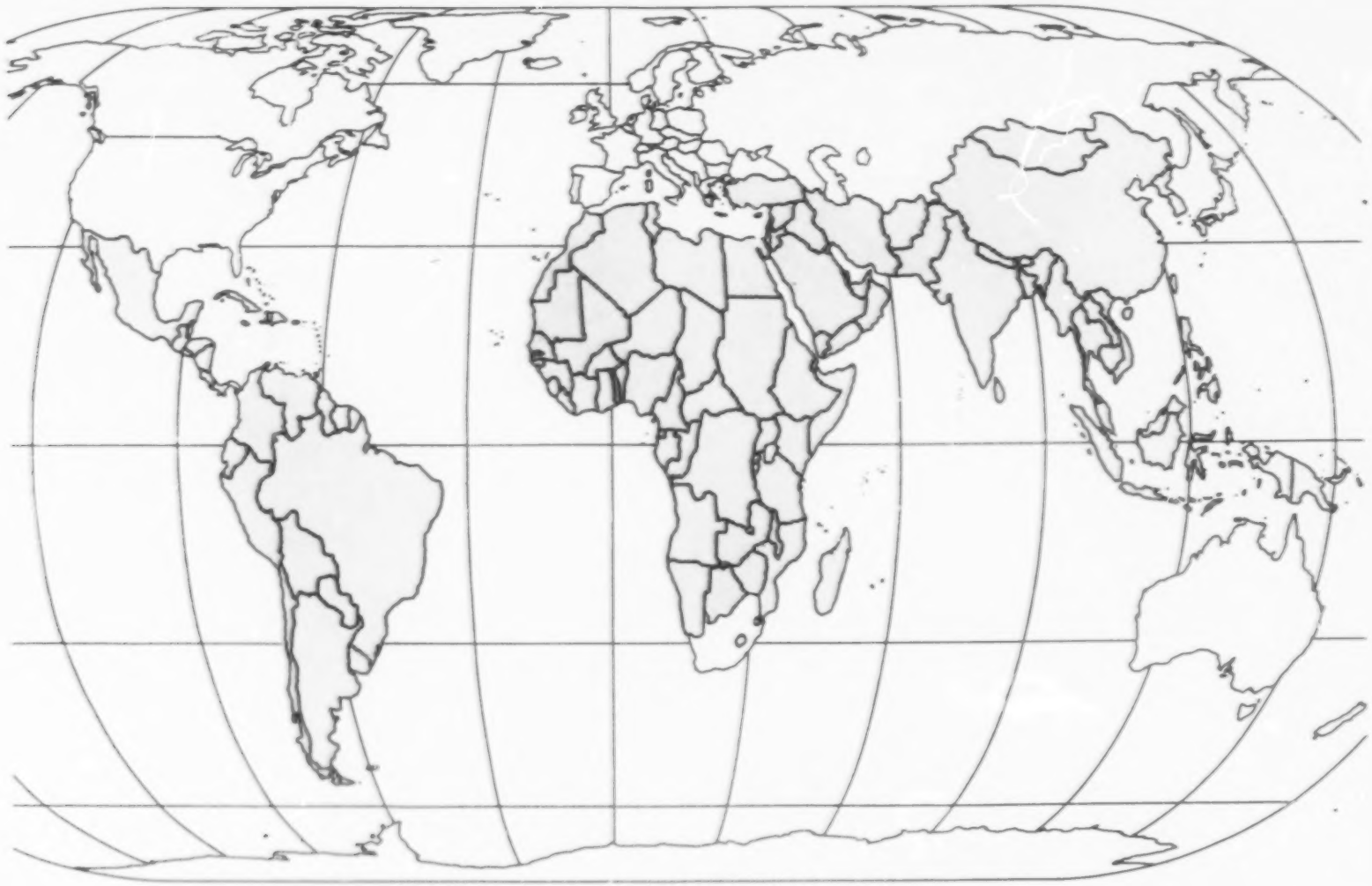
Source: *Good Morning Revolution*. New York: Lawrence Hill. Reprinted by permission of Harold Ober Assoc., Inc. Copyright 1973 by Faith Berry.

**Discussion questions on "The Arithmetic of Poverty":**

**a)** What is the woman's dilemma?
**b)** What would it be like to have to make such a decision?
**c)** How is she trying to make the decision?
**d)** Would you choose? If so, how? If not, why not?
**e)** Sita, the girl, is referred to as "expendable." What might this reveal about attitudes towards girls and women in this society?
**f)** Who might the woman hate as a result of having to make such a choice?

**Discussion questions on "God to a Hungry Child":**

**a)** What is the poet trying to say? Do you agree with his view?
**b)** What do you think the poet is feeling?
**c)** How would you compare/contrast the two poems?
**d)** How do you feel after reading these poems?



Third World (Developing Countries)

Industrialized Countries

Note: The countries considered to be "Third World" or "developing" countries vary slightly depending on what definitions and what indicators are used to classify them. Portugal, Israel, Albania, South Africa, and Yugoslavia are sometimes grouped with the developing countries rather than the industrialized ones.

10

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*Source: Franz, Del.* Exploring the Third World: Development in Africa, Asia and Latin America. *New York: The American Forum, 1987, Page 9.*

# FACTS HUNGER: MYTHS & REALITIES

## MYTH ONE

**There is not enough food and not enough land.**

Untrue: Measured globally, there is enough to feed everyone. For example there is enough grain being produced today to provide everybody in the world with enough protein and about 3000 calories a day, which is what the average American consumes. But the world's food supply is not evenly distributed. Those who have much accumulate more, while those who have little edge toward starvation. In most countries with widespread hunger, a few large landowners control nearly all agricultural production sometimes with disastrous results. Much rich farmland remains unused, or one harvest is gathered per year when there could be two or three. Land is used for "cash crops" such as cotton or coffee instead of food. To the owners, land becomes an "investment" not a source of food for the people who live on it.

## MYTH TWO

**There are too many people to feed.**

Contrary to popular belief, overpopulation is not the cause of hunger. It's usually the other way around: hunger is one of the real causes of overpopulation. The more children a poor family has the more likely some will survive to work in the fields or in the city to add to the family's small income and, later, to care for the parents in their old age. All this points to the disease that is at the root of both hunger and overpopulation: the powerlessness of people who must rely on food that is grown and distributed by wealthy people who have never felt hunger pangs, yet who determine how the land will be used, if at all and who will benefit from its fruits. High birth rates are symptoms of the failures of a social system –inadequate family income, inadequate nutrition and health care and old-age security.

## MYTH THREE

**Growing more food will mean less hunger in poor countries.**

But it doesn't seem to work that way. "More food" is what the last 30 years' War on Hunger has been about. Farming methods have been "modernized," ambitious irrigation plans carried out, "miracle" seeds, new pesticides, fertilizers and machinery have become available. But who has come out better off? Farmers who already have land, money and the ability to buy on credit — not the desperately poor and hungry. In Pakistan for example a farmer must have at least 12.5 acres of land to get a loan from the Bank: but this excludes over 80 percent of Pakistan's farmers! Who else benefits? Moneylenders, landlords, bureaucrats, military officers, city-based speculators and foreign corporations — as the value of the land goes up only the rich can afford to buy the farming land. Small farmers go bankrupt or are bought out. Human energy and imagination can be organized to turn a desert into a grainfield. This can be done — we have the know-how. When land is in the hands of the people who live and work on it, they are more likely to be motivated to make the land more productive and distribution of food more equitable thus benefitting all peoples.

**Global Hunger:**

"950 million people are chronically malnourished. 10 million women who are themselves malnourished bear malnourished babies."

*World Military & Social Expenditures, 1989*

Each year 15 million children under age 5 die — ¼ of all the world's deaths. Up to half of those who survive suffer malnutrition severe enough to leave them with nonreversible damage.

*Understanding the Presbyterian Hunger Program*

"Every minute 15 children in the world die for want of essential food and inexpensive vaccines and every minute the world's military machine takes another $1,900,000 from the public treasury."

*World Military & Social Expenditures, 1989*

We could save many of the world's children at an overall cost of $5 each through programs promoting immunization, breastfeeding, rehydration therapy (which counteracts diarrhea) and improved child care generally.

*GAIA: An Atlas of Planet Management*

**Poverty and Plenty:**

In the Northern Hemisphere, malnutrition takes the form of over-consumption of sugars, fats and animal products resulting in obesity, heart disease and diabetes. In the US alone, at least ⅓ of those aged over 40 can be classified as obese. In 1982, the UK spent 235 million on slimming aids — compared to just 50 million donated to private aid agencies.

*GAIA: An Atlas of Planet Management*

"The chances of dying from social neglect (from malnutrition and preventable disease) are 33 times greater than the chances of dying in a war."

*World Military & Social Expenditures, 1989*

Each child born in the industrialized world will consume 20 to 40 times as much as a child in the developing world in his or her lifetime. So small population increases in the rich world put 8 times as much pressure on world resources as larger population increases in the poor world.

*Understanding the Presbyterian Hunger Program*

## MYTH FOUR

**Hunger is a contest between rich countries and poor countries.**

To many Americans the hungry world is seen as the enemy who in Lyndon Johnson's words, "ain't what we got." But hunger will never be eliminated until we recognize the poor of Bangladesh, Colombia, or Senegal as our neighbors. Rich or poor we are all part of the same global food system which is gradually coming under the control of a few huge corporations. These giant businesses grow and market food for the benefit of those people who have money which means primarily people in North American and Europe. Poor people in the Third World market pay food prices that are determined by what people in rich countries are willing to pay. This is direct cause of hunger in many poor countries. On the other hand, people in rich countries are unaware that their own consumption is creating a suction force in the world food market, diverting food from meeting the needs of the very people who have grown it. In both rich and poor countries farmers, workers, consumers feel the impact of this system of international control, through artificial shortages of certain products, through high food prices, through poor-quality goods. Even in countries like the United States and Canada, small farmers find themselves unable to afford the machinery they need to keep their farms running well. Older people on small pensions even in the United States and Canada, find themselves unable to afford the food they deserve.

## MYTH FIVE

**Hunger can be solved by redistributing the food to the hungry.**

Over and over we hear that North America is the world's last remaining "bread basket." The rich world's overconsumption and wastefulness are endlessly compared with the misery of the poor. True. Adapting a simpler lifestyle helps us to understand our interrelatedness with all people and less wastefulness is better stewardship. But neither "one less hamburger a week," nor massive food aid programs, will eventually solve widespread starvation and poverty in the poorest nation. People will only cease to be poor when they control the means of providing and/or producing food for themselves. We must face up to the real questions: Who controls the land? Who cultivates it? A few, or all who need to? What will be grown in poorer nations — strawberries to export to the tables of the well-fed in the United Staters or basic grains for local consumption? How can control of the land get back into the hands of the people who need it? Who influences the distribution of food? How can people be enabled to provide food for themselves?

## MYTH SIX

**A strong military defense provides a secure environment in which people can prosper.**

But who feels secure on an empty stomach? The extraordinary investment the world makes in armaments annually (currently $900 billion) ensures that few funds are available for agricultural and economic development and shows that those who decide how a nation's money is spent are not intimately acquainted with the violence of hunger. The security of countries both great and small, depends first of all on a population that has enough food, enough jobs, adequate energy and safe, comfortable housing. When a society cannot provide these basics, all the guns and bombs in the world cannot maintain peace.

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*This article is based on material by Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins, co-authors of "Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity," and "World Hunger: Twelve Myths." All graphics used with permission of Youth Magazine, United Church Press.*

**Hunger in the US:**

Our children are growing poorer. All groups of children are poorer today than at the beginning of the decade.

Poverty rates among white children has increased by almost a third. If present trends persist, white children may eventually face the same savage levels of poverty in the future that now afflict black and Hispanic children. Today, nearly one in two black and one in three Hispanic children is poor.

In the year 2000, one in four of all American children, 16 million children, will be poor — 3 million more than in 1987.

*Children's Defense Budget, 1989*

Hunger is a problem of epidemic proportions across the US. While no one knows the precise number of hungry Americans, available evidence indicates that up to 20,000,000 citizens may be hungry at least some period of time each month.

Some 71% of the soup kitchens and food pantries reported that private charity cannot meet the need for food assistance in the local communities.

*Physician Task Force on Hunger in America*

**Sources:**

*GAIA: An Atlas of Planet Management*, 1984, Dr. Norman Myers, editor Anchor Press/Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York.

*Hunger in America: The Growing Epidemic*, 1985, Physician Task Force on Hunger in America, Harvard University School of Public Health.

*Understanding the Presbyterian Hunger Program*, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202.

*A Vision for America's Future: An Agenda for the 1990s: A Children's Defense Budget*, 1989, Children's Defense Fund, 122 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001.

*World Hunger: Twelve Myths*, 1986, Frances Moore Lappé and Joseph Collins, Food First, Institute for Food & Development Policy, 145 Ninth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

*World Military & Social Expenditures*, 1989, Ruth Leger Sivard, World Priorities, Inc., Box 25140, Washington, DC 20007.

**Additional Resources:**

*Exploding the Hunger Myths: A High School Curriculum*, 1987, Sonja Williams, Institute for Food & Development Policy, 145 Ninth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

*Food, Hunger, Agribusiness: A Directory of Resources*, Arthur Simon, Bread for the World, 802 Rhode Island Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20018.

*State of the World*, 1989, Worldwatch Institute, 1776 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20036.

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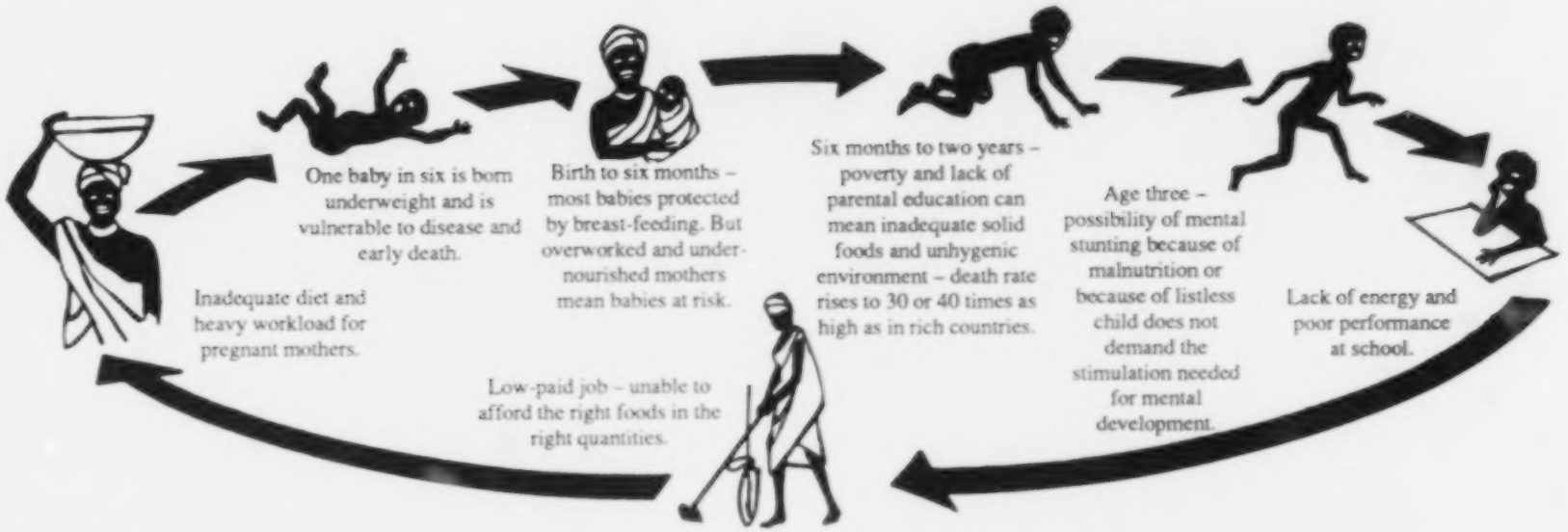
This FACT sheet is one of a series, each covering a facet of Global Education.


Inadequate diet and heavy workload for pregnant mothers.
One baby in six is born underweight and is vulnerable to disease and early death.
Birth to six months – most babies protected by breast-feeding. But overworked and under-nourished mothers mean babies at risk.
Six months to two years – poverty and lack of parental education can mean inadequate solid foods and unhygenic environment – death rate rises to 30 or 40 times as high as in rich countries.
Age three – possibility of mental stunting because of malnutrition or because of listless child does not demand the stimulation needed for mental development.
Lack of energy and poor performance at school.
Low-paid job – unable to afford the right foods in the right quantities.

## The Hunger Cycle

# Part Two: Children and Justice

**Teacher's Note:** The activities included in this unit are structured in a sequential fashion. Depending on the time availability and the appropriateness of the activities to your particular class, you may wish to select among the activities to create your own curriculum. With minor adjustments, each sub-section could be used by itself. However, some possible combinations are:

Sections IB, IC, IE, IIA, IIB, IIC, III, IV
(approximately 45 minutes)

Sections IC, IIA, IIB, IIIA, IIIC, IV
(approximately 45 minutes)

### Objectives

1. To know what the rights of children are.
2. To understand the need for the protection of children's rights.
3. To introduce the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child and to appreciate the need for all nations to ratify the Convention.
4. To hear the voices of children whose rights are being violated.
5. To understand that students can make a difference, and to identify ways in which students can act.

### Materials

- a chalk board or large sheets of paper
- copies or transparencies of Student Handouts
- overhead projector (if you are using transparencies)

*"Why have children's rights never been implemented? Why has a world full of parents been unable to keep any of its promises to children? Because children have no votes. They have no political power. They lack even the other kind of power which comes from the barrel of a gun."*
—T. Vittachi

# Lesson Plan: Children and Justice

**I. Definitions of the Rights of the Child:**

**A.** Remind students that in the lesson on hunger, the question of what is meant by the terms "just" and "fair" was raised. Ask the students to reiterate what was discussed in the earlier lessons in terms of the meanings of these two words. (If you did not cover that section with the students, use this opportunity to discuss what the two terms mean.)

Now ask students:

Have they ever been treated unfairly?
If so, which of their rights was abused?
Do children have rights?

As the students struggle to answer the questions, encourage them to be specific and relate their answers back to the discussion of "justice" and "fairness".

**B.** Explain to the class that today's lesson will focus on the rights of the child. Ask how many students have heard of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. If any students know something about it, ask them to provide some background. If not, explain that the United Nations came up with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 and that since then, it has stood as a testament to the fundamental freedoms and protections that all human beings are entitled to.

Distribute copies of **Student Handout #1** or make a transparency and display it on an overhead projector for the class to see. Tell the students that this is a summary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Go over each item, making sure that everyone understands what it represents.

Afterwards, ask one student to summarize the intent behind the document. Correct the student as is necessary. [***Note***: You may wish to explain to the students that a U.N. declaration is a written set of agreed general principles that is advisory in nature and is not binding.]

**C.** Tell students that in 1959, building upon the statement in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that "motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance," the United Nations drafted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in an effort to more clearly protect the special rights of children. However, U.N. declarations are not binding. Therefore, in November 1989, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in an effort to offer more protection to children. As is customary, having been adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, the Convention on the Rights of the Child is now in the process of being ratified by the member nations. **The U.S.A. has not yet ratified the Convention**. It is hoped that all nations will ratify the document as soon as possible. To that end, it is important that people be informed as to what the document includes and why it is so necessary.

**D.** Write on the board the following:

*The Right to Survival*
*The Right to Protection*
*The Right to Develop*

Ask students to brainstorm their own thoughts of what is meant by each heading. Take a few minutes to explore what each category means to the students.

**1)** Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5 students each. Distribute copies of the Summary of the U.N. Draft Convention on the rights of Children (**Student Handout #2**).

**2)** Explain to the students that each article in the summary of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child broadly fits under one of the categories on the board. Instruct each group to read the articles of the Summary of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. As a group, they should decide which of the three major categories that particular article addresses. Once they have come to an agreement, instruct them to write next to the article "S" if it represents the right to Survival, "P" if it represents the right to Protection, and "D" if it represents the right to Develop.

**3)** Allow about 5 minutes for this to occur. When it appears that the groups are done, ask for their attention. Go through each article with the class, finding out how each group categorized the articles. When there is dis-

agreement, discuss the various options and try to reach consensus as to which category the article belongs in.

**4)** Open up a general discussion on the topic of rights of children. Some possible discussion questions are:

- How do the rights listed in the Convention compare to the thoughts that students had when they first saw the categories on the board?
- How many of the rights in the document are vital to them as teenagers in America?
- Have they ever seen or read about children who have been denied one or more of these rights?
- Which of the rights do they feel is the most important?
- Why do they think those particular rights were chosen by the U.N.?
- Are there any rights that they would like to add?

**E.** Now that the students have an idea of what is meant by the rights of the child, pose two very important questions to the class:

**1) Do children need special protection beyond that afforded adults? Why or why not?** ***Note****:* Some reasons that support providing special protection for children include:

- *physical immaturity*
- *mental immaturity*
- *special needs in order to develop*
- *not participating members in political community*

**2) Who should protect children?** [***Note****:* You may wish to point out that in Developed Countries, although there are many laws to protect children, the ultimate responsibility falls on parents. What happens if the parents are powerless?]

In the course of the discussion, try to help students understand that children have needs that warrant special protection and that parents alone are not always able to provide the protection needed. This is not to say that parents in the Developing World are not caring and loving but that the resources, or the power and knowledge to use those resources, may not always be accessible to the parents. At that point, someone else must step in.

## II. Dimensions of the Problem: Case Studies:

Explain to students that the abuses of the rights of children occur all over the world, in every community–rich or poor–and take on every possible form. Confronted with such a vast amount of information, it is sometimes better to focus on one topic and then share ones knowledge with others. That is the plan for this part of the lesson.

In the student resource section there are 4 case studies (**Student Handouts #3–#6**) from 4 different parts of the world representing 4 different (but related) abuses of the rights of children as listed in the Convention. Ask groups of students to read carefully and consider one such area and then to report back their findings to the class.

**A.** Divide students into 4 heterogeneous groups. Give each group one case study and the accompanying questions. Instruct the group to read the case study carefully (they may choose to have one person read it aloud or to take turns with each member reading a section aloud). After they have read it, ask them to write complete and thoughtful answers to the questions on the sheet. Tell them that after about 15 minutes, you will ask them to report back to the class on what they have learned. Remind students that this is a group activity and that they are to work together and discuss the answers to each question as a group. (Giving each group only one copy of their case study and the accompanying questions may serve to facilitate the group process.) As the students read the case study and answer the questions, circulate and insist that they work together.

**B.** After about 15 minutes, ask a volunteer from each group to report back to the class. Take time to pose questions to each group in order to guide them in presenting thorough and informative findings. Ask what their feeling reaction is to these situations.

**C.** After each group has had a chance to share with the class, compile of list on the board of similarities that were found in their readings. This list may include such items as:

- *lack of education*
- *need to work to support themselves or their families*

- *lack of basics for survival*
- *lack of a "childhood" in the sense that we often use it*
- *resourcefulness of young children*
- *children as active participants in the economy*

[*Note*: You may wish to spend some time discussing the image of children from the Developing World that is portrayed by the media (helpless, passive) as compared to the image of children we see in the case studies. All of the children in the case studies are vibrant, active participants who have accepted responsibilities far greater than most Developed Country children do.]

**D.** Point out to the class that the case studies they looked at were from **Developing Countries** (See Hunger Lesson Plan). Ask them if the rights of children are abused in **Developed Countries**? Insist that they provide specific examples.

Distribute copies of **Student Handout #7** or make a transparency of it use an overhead projector to display it for all to see. Point out to students that in the United States, a country considered to be one of the richest in the world, the rights of children are abused. Go over each fact. In your discussion of the facts, draw comparisons to the case studies. For example, the educational and health disparities between whites and blacks in the United States is similar to those that the students learned about in the case study on South Africa.

**E.** Summarize what has been learned in this part of the lesson by returning the the handout summarizing the Convention. Point out that each article in the Convention has a specific purpose. Spend a few minutes linking the specific case studies or facts with the intent behind specific articles.

### III. The Principle of First Call:

Point out to the students that the abuses about which they read in the case studies are systemic, long-term problems. The solutions to such problems will only emerge after many years of concerted attention. However, there are some abuses of the rights of children which could be remedied in the next five to ten years, IF the people of the world wish to direct their resources to solving such problems. To this end, the Convention on the Rights of the Child embodies a fundamental principle that children should have first call on society's concerns and capacities. (*The State of the World's Children 1990*, United Nations Children's Fund, p.7) The technology and resources to help many children are available right now. If countries and governments direct resources and energies appropriately, the situations of many children, like the ones in the case studies can be drastically improved. The purpose of this section is to impress upon students that meaningful progress has and will be made, if we, the children and adults of the world, wish to.

**A.** Distribute copies of or make a transparency and display on an overhead projector **Student Handout #8**. Point out that 4 specific diseases–diarrhea, respiratory infections, measles and neo-natal tetanus–account for almost two-thirds of the 14 million child deaths each year. The great majority of these could now be prevented at very low cost. For example, the Oral Rehydration Salts required to save a child suffering from diarrhoeal dehydration cost about 10-cents. To cure acute respiratory infections, children need a course of antibiotics, usually costing less than $1. (*The State of the World's Children 1990*. United Nations Children's Fund. p. 22)

**B.** Distribute copies of or make a transparency and display on an overhead projector **Student Handout #9**. Explain that this indicates a missed opportunity. Help students understand that if countries and governments place children first, much of the needless suffering can be avoided.

**C.** Summarize by engaging in a discussion using the following questions as guidelines:

- Why might the principle of first call make a difference?
- Where are resources now going that might be redirected to helping children?
- If all the countries ratify the Convention, do you think it will help?

### IV. Summary

Ask student to reflect on what they have learned in this lesson. Ask them to draw connections to what was learned in the Children and Hunger Lesson.

**Turn to Part Three: Students *CAN* Make a Difference.** Go through the steps of helping students decide what they would like to do to improve the lives of children locally and globally.

# The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights

## (Summary)

**All human beings have the right:**

- to life, liberty and the security of person
- to freedom from slavery and discrimination
- to a family and to marry
- to own property
- to a nationality and to participate in government
- to education, work, rest and leisure
- to an adequate standard of living and security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond their control

Source: Castelle, Kay. *In the Child's Best Interest, A Primer on the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, 3rd Ed.* New York: Defense for Children International-USA, 1990. p.2.

# Summary of the U.N. Convention On the Rights of Children

*by Defense for Children International–U.S.A.*

### Unofficial Summary of Articles

The U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted at the General Assembly in the fall of 1989, addresses the social, economic, cultural, civil and political rights of children, and defines the obligations of adults towards children. Although protections for children are contained in other international instruments, this convention consolidates existing international law on children, establishes new standards and addresses needs not previously considered. On December 9, 1988, after nine years of deliberations, the open-ended working group of government representatives finished the second reading of the Convention. The working group amended some of the wording contained in previously published articles, and reordered and renumbered them.

In the following unofficial summary, prepared by DCI-US, the synopsis of each article was taken from a text of the Convention based on three U.N. working papers. This text may be modified by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council of the U.N. in the spring of 1989, and by the U.N. General Assembly in the fall.

**Article 1: Definition of Child**
Every person under 18, unless national law grants majority at an earlier age.

**Article 2: Freedom from Discrimination**
Rights in the Convention to apply to all children without exception: the State to protect children from any form of discrimination or punishment based on family's status, activities or beliefs.

**Article 3: Best Interests of Child**
The best interests of the child to prevail in all legal and administrative decisions; the State to ensure the establishment of institutional standards for the care and protection of children.

**Article 4: Implementation of Rights**
The State to translate the rights in the Convention into actuality.

**Article 7: Name and Nationality**
The right to a name and to acquire a nationality; the right to know and be cared for by parents.

**Article 9: Parental Care and Non-Separation**
The right to live with parents unless this is deemed incompatible with the child's best interests; the right to maintain contact with both parents; the State to provide information when separation results from State action.

**Article 10: Family Reunification**
The right to leave or enter any country for family reunification and to maintain contact with both parents.

**Article 14: Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion**
The right to determine and practice any belief; State to respect the rights of parents or guardians to provide direction in the exercise of this right.

**Article 16: Protection of Privacy**
The right to protection from arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy, family, home or correspondence, or attacks on honor and reputation.

**Article 19: Abuse and Neglect**
The State to protect children from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation by parents or others, and to undertake preventive and treatment programs in this regard.

**Article 24: Health Care**
The right to the highest attainable standard of health and access to medical services; the State to attempt to diminish infant and child mortality, combat disease and malnutrition, ensure health care for expectant mothers, provide access to health education, develop preventive health care, abolish harmful traditional practices and promote international cooperation to achieve this right.

**Article 33: Narcotics**
The State to protect children from illegal narcotic and psychotropic drugs and from involvement in their production or distribution.

**Article 34 : Sexual Exploitation**
The State to protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

**Article 35: Sale and Trafficking**
The State to prevent the sale, trafficking and abduction of children.

**Article 37: Torture, Capital Punishment and Deprivation of Liberty**
The State to protect children from: torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; capital punishment or life imprisonment for offenses committed by persons below the age of 18; an dunlawful or arbitrary deprivation of liberty. The right of children deprived of liberty to be treated with humanity and respect, to be separated from adults to maintain contact with family members and to have prompt access to legal assitance.

**Article 39: Rehabilitative Care**
The State to ensure the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of child victims of abuse, neglect, exploitation, torture or armed conflicts.

**Article 42: Public Awareness**
States to make the rights contained in this Convention widely known to both adults and children.

Passed unanimously by the U.N. General Assembly on Nov. 20, 1989. Complete text of the 54 Articles can be obtained from:

Defense for Children
International-U.S.A.
210 Forsyth Street
New York, New York 10002

# India–Child Labor

Child workers are a common feature of the Indian labor market and children work in industries ranging from lock-making to agriculture. The International Labour Organization has estimated that there are more than 16.5 million child laborers in India, over 90% in agriculture and associated rural occupations, less than 10% in urban areas. According to an Indian Planning Commission estimate, made in 1985, there are more than this.

There are regular stories in the Indian press about the wrongful confinement and physical abuse of child weavers. In 1979, a report that a small boy was branded with a red hot poker by a supervisor for not obeying instructions provoked an official enquiry into the conditions of children in the carpet weaving industry in Kashmir. It was established that 150,000 children aged 8-10 were earning a daily wage of 2 rupees. The children were found to be working in poorly ventilated, badly lit rooms, laden with dust and fluff from the wool or cotton, squatting on the floor hunched in front of the looms, staring at their work for very long periods. For growing children, the consequences of working in these conditions are far more serious than they would be for adults. According to one medical report, carpet-weaving children are significantly underweight and malnourished, they suffer from headaches, blurring of vision, backaches, abdominal pains, limb pains and respiratory tract infections. There are also frequent reports of forced labor that amounts to little more than slavery. For example, in 1987 the journal *Child Workers in Asia* published allegations that 30 children aged between five and twelve had been kidnapped in Bihar. They were taken to the Mirzapur district of Uttar Pradesh and obliged to weave carpets for as long as 22 hours a day. According to the report, they were tortured, scarred, beaten and paid nothing.

> *"The major concern in the sphere of child labor is the exploitation of children at work rather than the simple fact that children are working."*
> – International Children Rights Monitor.

The handicraft industry gives employment to children throughout the smallscale sector, which survives by sub-contracting work to ensure lower production costs and higher profit margins. If it is more profitable, large factories and mills are closed and the work transferred to small units, which employ women and children. Child labor cannot be justified purely on the grounds of poverty when adult unemployment and underemployment is high throughout India.

In reality, employers have a vested interest in expounding this argument: children work because their labor is cheap and because their collective bargaining power is minimal. Another myth is that children are employed because their small fingers are more nimble at certain tasks (like knotting carpets) than adult fingers would be. But just try to imagine children as watchmakers in Switzerland! Even the skills these small workers acquire are of little use to them in the labor market. As they get older they are replaced by yet another set of young, cheap, manipulable children. It gives a new meaning to such terms as "redundancy" or "early retirement".

It would be wrong to imply that every Indian child is a child laborer. Even the 44 million who are believed to be so are only 13% of the nation's 336 million children under the age of 15. Nevertheless, the quality of life of most of them is below the standards desired by national policy makers. There are high rates of infant mortality, malnutrition and nutrition-related diseases, leading to temporary or permanent disabilities. It is estimated that 40 million children under the age of six do not have access to the basic minimum needs of health and nutrition. Literacy remains low and, for the reasons we have already seen, there are high rates of school dropout. In all these situations there are wide variations across regions, economic class, caste, cultural group and gender, which reflect the superabundant heterogeneity of Indian life. Socio-religious factors, traditional values, differential sex upbringing and the health and nutritional status of mothers make the problems relating to child care and development extremely complex.

Adapted From: Ennew, Judith and Brian Milne. *The Next Generation, Lives of Third World Children*. New Society Publishers, Philadelphia, PA, Santa Cruz, CA. 1-800-333-9093.

## Questions

1. Describe in your own words the working conditions of child laborers in India.

2. What are some of the health consequences for children who work under such conditions as you described above?

3. What are three reasons why employers hire child laborers? Do the authors feel that these are good or justifiable reasons? Do you agree?

4. Do the child laborers gain useful life skills in their jobs (in other words, skills that will be useful for them in finding jobs when they are adults)? Explain why or why not.

5. Identify at least 3 basic rights that child laborers are denied. (You may wish to refer to the summary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to answer this question.)

# Brazil – Street Children

Brazil is a wealthy but grossly unequal state. The children of the urban *favelas* (slums), of poor agricultural workers, of the jungle and of the streets live in dire poverty and suffer the double disadvantage of being children: powerless, vulnerable and unable to gain access to health care or "free" education.

Children see getting a job as part of their obligation to their families and their parents. It is expected that boys in working-class areas will start to earn around their 13th birthday, while girls of this age are usually occupied looking after younger children or in other domestic tasks. This is because adult women will be able to earn higher wages than the girls.

Grubby-faced little urchins pose grinning for cameramen from the world's glossy magazines; children are shown sleeping in rows on the streets of Sao Paulo or Recife; children who, we are told, are thieves and murderers. Nevertheless, even this is a false image. The majority of street children are boys and girls aged 17 or less who spend a lot of their time on the street working. Their work is any one of an enormous range of informal economic activities. They are on the streets either to maintain themselves or help maintain their families. They work long hours at their chosen occupation and then the majority of them go home. Home and the family still provide the basic framework of their lives. Some, however, do not go home at night because they have lost contact with their families, or are not welcome, or are orphaned. These are the true street children.

> *"We want the strength of the community."*
>
> –Street vendors' slogan, Brazil

Marginalization has made street children into "criminals". Some of them do steal but many more are beggars. Beggars are seen as vagrants unless some kind of disability presents an obvious reason for unemployment. Frequent "visits" to police stations, homes, detention centers and prisons certainly induce some children to be criminals. Gangs operate in a highly professional manner, ruling territories and preparing members for a life of crime. It is an alternative that suits the need to survive. Glue-sniffing is especially common as a way of escape and it also provides a profitable training opportunity for older street children. It is not crime that has created the environment, but the environment that has created criminality. The *trombadinha*, the small boy who bumps into people to distract them whilst he picks their pockets, is simply surviving as best he can. In a gang, chances are better. It is a hard, lonely life in a big world when you are eight and on your own.

Of course, preventing children coming on to the streets in the first place would be the best answer. But, for those already there, the solution probably lies in projects like "The Little Street Vendors' Republic", set up by Padre Bruno Sechi in Belem. This is a small city in Brazilian terms, with a population of about 1,000,000. The Republic launches an attack on the problem on two fronts: on the one hand it tries to improve the lives of Belem's street children, on the other it is trying to change the community's view of these children and to improve their chances of reintegration in a highly competitive world.

The Republic's practical work provides six months' intensive training for youths in mechanical workshops. Once this is finished, they are given assistance to set up their own co-operatives. An annual display of the young people's capacities is used as a one-day campaign of collecting used furniture, household goods, clothes, bicycles or whatever happens to be available. This is seen as the best way of getting the general public to participate and aid the children's work. The children repair the goods in the project's workshops and then sell them at markets or in the project's second-hand shop. The scale of the one-day drive is immense; in 1987, over 80 trucks were commandeered for the campaign. The children chose their own slogan: *"Queremos a forca de comunidade"* -- "We want the strength of the community."

Adapted From: Ennew, Judith and Brian Milne, *The Next Generation, Lives of Third World Children*. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1990. pp 147-154.

### Questions

1. In the first paragraph, the authors describe the "double disadvantage of being children." Describe in your own words what they mean.

2. Why do children go to the streets to work? What are the conditions that they face on the streets?

3. How do the authorities and the community view the street children? Do the authors agree with this perspective? Explain in your own words.

4. What are the "signs of hope" for the street children?

5. Identify at least 3 basic rights that street children are denied. (You may wish to refer to the summary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to answer this question.)

# South Africa–Discrimination

The Afrikaans word "apartheid" simply means "separateness". The closest word in the English language is "separation". The separation is of people into racially segregated groups, which definitions has more basis in ideology than in biology. When combined with other "natural" distinctions such as gender and age and the economic division of class, it means that rich, white, adult males have the greatest power in society while poor, black, female children are the most powerless group of all.

The distribution of power is maintained by the establishment of different educational opportunities for the races. It is this inequality in education that has drawn South African children into the forefront of the violent struggle against apartheid. In 1976, the first violent protests by school children against the state took place. Since the schoolchildren and students have clashed continually with the state, thousands of them have been injured or killed in ferocious street battles and during police raids on demonstrations in schools. A series of school boycotts reached its peak in 1985-1986 when an estimated 220,000 primary and secondary school children were reported to have stayed away from their schools. In contrast to Western child liberation lobbies, this is not a cause taken up on their behalf by adult champions. Children themselves are demanding rights.

*"Children themselves are demanding rights."*

–The Lives of Third World Children

The South African government has decided that, in order to break the spirit of protest, you have to break the spirit of youth, which means a repression felt by young people who may not even be activists. For example, one 15 year old boy, who had never taken part in protests, was walking home from school with a friend. They saw a transporter full of policemen approaching, and the friend ran away. This is what the boy says happened next:

> Six police, two white and four blacks, got out of the Combi. The white policemen knocked me down with his gun and then three of them took me to the street corner...[they] assaulted me with rubber truncheons. They threatened me with a knife. One of the policemen told me to run so that they could shoot me...They drove me to the schoolyard where they assaulted me again. They hit me with rubber truncheons and *sjamboks*. Then they blindfolded me with a greasy cloth and tied my hands behind my back with my belt.

He was detained for three days for suspected car theft, then released without a reason.

Although detention can be rationalized in terms of a "place of safety", which keeps minors out of harm's way, children who are detained have consistently complained of assaults and abuse. A sample of 40 statements by detainees under 18 contained 24 allegations of torture, which included:

- kicking, *sjambokking*, caning, slapping and beating
- forced exercise for extended periods
- electric shock treatment
- hanging by the neck
- drowning
- being made to hold a hand grenade
- being forced to lick a soldier's blood
- being suspended and then dropped on the floor
- having water thrown over them and being made to sleep on it

A quarter of these statements included the complaint that intimidation had been used in an attempt to make them become informers which, if true, would put the children at risk of reprisals when they return to their own neighborhoods. Intimidation included threats that they would:

- be killed
- have their homes petrol bombed
- be detained for...up to 15 years
- be locked in a cell for 5 years
- have a tire placed around their necks and set alight
- have petrol poured on their heads and hands and then set on fire
- be hanged

Medical examinations have verified many such allegations.

Adapted From: Ennew, Judith and Brian Milne. *The Next Generation, Lives of Third World Children*. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1990. pp 131-137.

**Questions**

1. What does apartheid mean and why is it a form of discrimination?
2. In what ways do different educational opportunities for the races maintain the policy of apartheid?
3. Describe the conditions that children face when they are in prison.
4. In your opinion, why is the government waging a campaign of terror against young black school children? Try to provide several reasons.
5. Identify at least 3 basic rights that black children in South Africa are denied. (You may wish to refer to the summary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to answer this question.)

# Lebanon–War

The present, seemingly insoluble, war in Lebanon began to all intents and purposes in 1975 and has been further aggravated by conflicts between various Lebanese Islamic groups, between Palestinians and Lebanese, Syrians and Israelis and also be invasions and occupations of Lebanon by Israel and Syria. Nothing abuses children more than War. It is not just that conflicts fought out between adults with lethal weapons injure and kill children. These are the external, physical abuses. Underneath, wars inflict serious psychological, social and moral damage which is likely to be incurable.

In terms of direct physical injuries alone, the conflict in Lebanon has had effects equal to any epidemic or famine. If has been estimated that there were over 120,000 deaths due to civil strife between 1975 and 1985. This conflict is particularly modern, which means that an unusually high number of casualties, about 90%, are civilian victims of war...The number of child victims in that period is difficult to calculate, but it is likely that, in any one incident, the proportion of child deaths will range from 15 to 35 per cent. This means, that from 1975 to 1985, between 18,000 and 42,000 children's lives were cut short as a direct result of The War. Alongside these direct victims are those who died as a result of diseases that could have been prevented by immunization or by access to clean water and adequate food: gastro-enteritis, measles, diphtheria, diseases related to malnutrition, and respiratory diseases. In *Barricades*, Leila Ahmed describes how, pregnant with her third child, she ran desperately from clinic to clinic under shell- and gunfire, carrying her son who had a high fever caused by drinking contaminated water, which could not be boiled because gas and electricity to the camp had been cut off. There was no medicine available, not even aspirin. Her son was left severely paralyzed, her baby was born dead.

The physical wounds that modern weaponry inflicts on children in Beirut are horrific. Limbs are blasted off by mines and car bombs; hideous damage is caused by high velocity bullets hitting tiny, vulnerable bodies; small individuals are crushed and suffocated by falling masonry.

Amidst the urgency of dealing with physically injured children, there is little time and few resources with which to tackle the psychological damage they suffer. The reported effects seem similar to those shown by many abused and unhappy children in our own environment: disturbed sleep, nightmares, rebressive behavior and increased fearfulness. Such children find it difficult to form relationships. They are insecure, have poor self-images, are depressive, have feelings of guilt.

In besieged refugee camps, and in the more violent areas of the country, normality seems to have been suspended and children are simply exposed to, and abused by, the worst excesses of adult behavior, and then neglected when they suffer from its effects. A Dutch nurse recounts seeing five children killing and eating a rat in a besieged camp where two babies had just died after being born prematurely to undernourished mothers. But even such unsavory food was in short supply during the siege of the camps--at its height in 1987. The journalists reported:

> *"If I see a dead person on the streets, I don't cry any more, because I see it all the time. Since I've been in America, I've played ping pong in your basements. In Beirut, a basement is where we hide from bombs and bullets."*
> – Marwan Najjar, age 15, Lebanon

Mohammed Hamoudi, 15, who escaped from Bourj al Barajneh on Friday said "I left because I want my six-year-old sister to eat what's left of my share of the cooked dog. I can manage to get food outside."

Another child who escaped the camp is Fadi Saker, 12, he crawled through the Amal lines on Thursday night. After living with his seven brothers and sisters, on the remains of a slaughtered donkey, he was found in Beirut, chewing on a handful of grass. "We ate lots of cats, dogs, rats, donkeys and mules. Now there's a shortage."

Adapted From: Ennew, Judith and Brian Milne. *The Next Generation, Lives of Third World Children*. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1990. pp 153 -163.

### Questions

1. Approximately how many children died between 1975 and 1985 in the conflict in Lebanon? Are these figures accurate? Why or Why not?

2. What are some of the other results of the war, other than direct deaths or injuries due to the fighting?

3. Describe some of the psychological effects of warfare on children.

4. How might the psychological effects of war affect children as they grow up?

5. Identify at least 3 basic rights that children in Lebanon are denied. (You may wish to refer to the summary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to answer this question.)

# Abuses of the Rights of the Child In the United States

**The following figures apply to all U.S. children:**

- Every eight seconds of the school day, a U.S. child drops out (552,000 during the 1987-1988 school year).
- Every 26 seconds of each day, a U.S. child runs away from home (1.2 million a year).
- Every 47 seconds, a U.S. child is abused or neglected (675,000 a year).
- Every seven minutes, a U.S. child is arrested for a drug offense (76,986 a year).
- Every 30 minutes, a U.S. child is arrested for drunken driving (17,674 a year).
- Every 36 minutes, a U.S. child is killed or injured by guns (14,600 a year).
- Every 53 minutes, a U.S. child dies because of poverty (10,000 a year).
- Every school day, 135,000 U.S. children bring guns to school. A child is safer in Northern Ireland than on the streets of the United States.
- Every day, 100,000 American children are homeless.

*Source:* Children 1990, A Report Card, Briefing Book and Action Primer. *Children's Defense Fund, 1990. pp 3-5.*

**However, the statistics for black children in the United States indicate that their rights are more frequently abused:**

- Almost half of all black children are poor compared to 1 in 6 white children.
- Black babies are more than twice as likely as white babies to be low birthweight at birth (less than 5.5 pounds). Low birthweight infants are more than 20 times as likely to die in the first year of life.
- White children are more likely than black children to be immunized. Between 47 and 61 percent of black pre-schoolers are not fully immunized against one or more preventable diseases.
- Between one-fifth and one-third of all black children and youth fall below the median white hemoglobin level, which is one indicator of poor nutritional status and anemia.
- Black students are twice as likely as white students to be suspended from school, to be corporally punished, or be out of school.

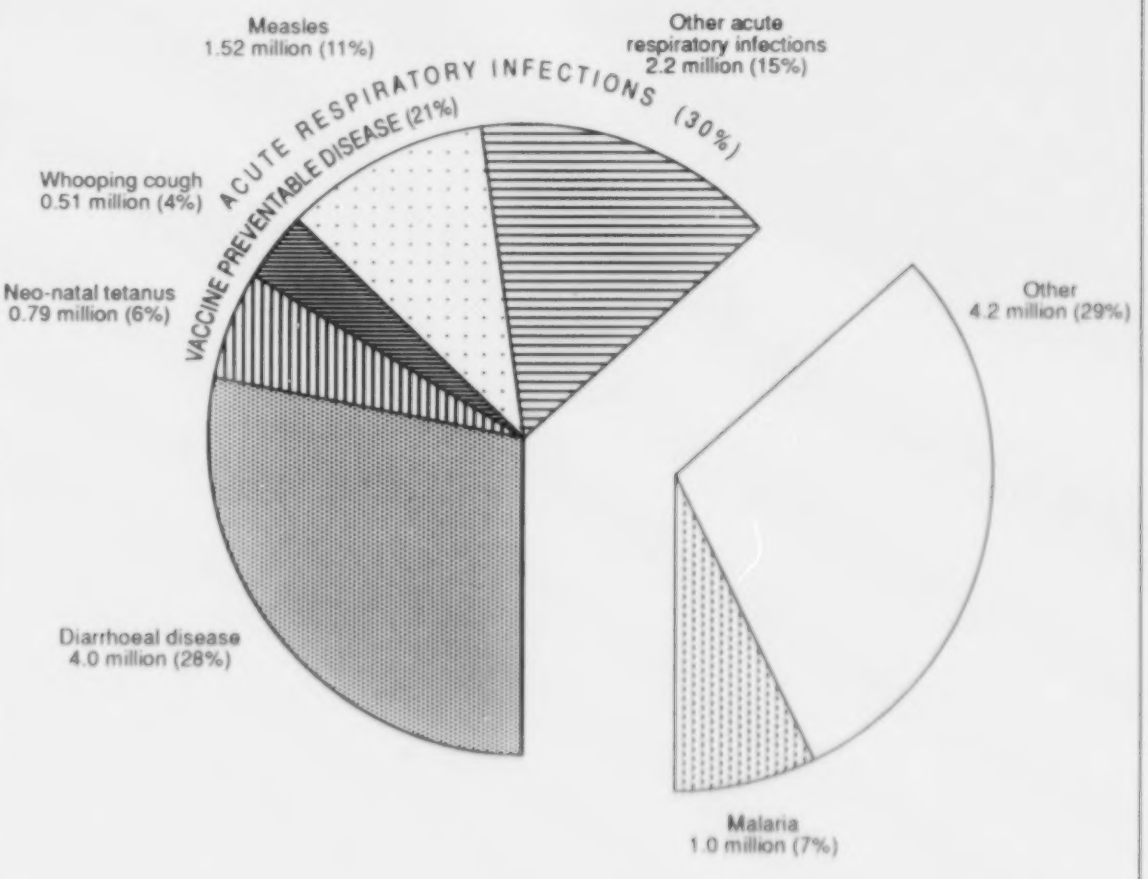
*Source:* Black and White Children in America, Key Facts. *Children's Defense Fund, 1985 pp 3-12.*

*"By any measure, children are the most underprivileged group in American society today. The facts about that are irrefutable."*
—Louis Harris, pollster

# Causes of Child Deaths

Almost two thirds of the 14 million child deaths each year are accounted for by just four specific causes – diarrhoea, respiratory infections, measles and neo-natal tetanus. The great majority of these deaths could now be prevented at very low cost.

## Annual deaths of children under five by main causes*



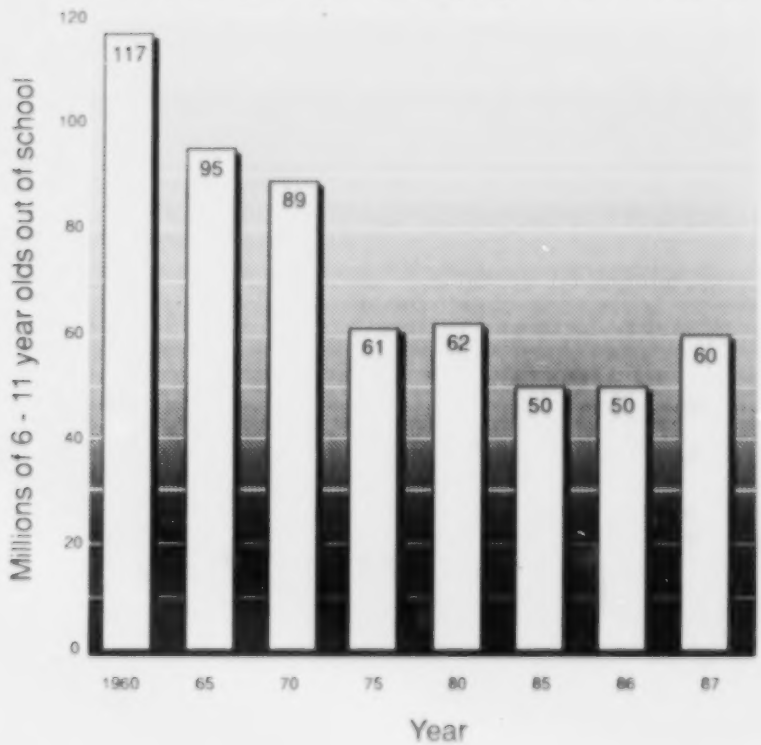

For the purposes of this chart, one cause has been allocated for each child death. In practice, children often die of multiple causes, and malnutrition is a contributory cause in approximately one-third of all child deaths. Measles deaths are sometimes ascribed to acute respiratory infection as a severe case of measles renders a child highly susceptible to other infections and pneumonia is often the ultimate reason for a death for which measles is primarily responsible.

Source: UNICEF's *State of the World's Children 1990*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990. WHO and UNICEF estimates.

# Progress Reversed

The 1960s and 1970s saw a rapid expansion of primary schooling in the developing world, reducing the number of children out of school to 50 million. In the mid 1980s the proportion of children enrolled began to fall while the total number of children continued to grow. As a result, the number of children out of school has increased to 60 million – the first significant rise in 4 decades.

Total Number of 6 to 11-year-olds not enrolled in primary schools in the developing world, 1960-1987.




Source: *UNICEF's State of the World's Children, 1990.* Population estimates and projections by the UN Population Division and estimates of primary enrolment calculated from the UNESCO Statistical Yearbook.

# Part Three: Students *CAN* Make a Difference

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."*
—Margaret Mead

Most authorities, including the President's Commission on World Hunger, agree that "the worst aspects of hunger and malnutrition can be eliminated within one generation if the human community acts cooperatively and decisively." We *CAN* make a difference!

**A. Ask students to share ways that they know of where individuals, groups of individuals or nations have tried to help deal with some of the global issues discussed in this lesson.** Students may come up with examples such as these:

- *Adopt a Child programs*
- *Personal/family donations to local or global agencies*
- *Live Aid, Band Aid, Comic Relief, We Are the World and similar efforts*
- *Direct foreign assistance (country to country)*
- *Aid from international agencies (Red Cross, UNICEF)*
- *Peace Corps, Church World Service*

Ask students to explain the quote: "Give someone a fish and s/he can eat for a day; teach someone to fish and s/he can eat for a lifetime." Ask students, based on what they have learned, whether such a solution would solve all the problems.

Help students understand the difference between short-term assistance (e.g. Red Cross relief efforts after a disaster) and long-term assistance (e.g. programs to develop reliable water supplies). Emphasize the need for both.

**B.** Ask students to **brainstorm ideas of what they can do** to help. After they have exhausted their ideas, distribute copies of **Handout (Signs of Hope)** to show what other students have done. Have students reflect on each example, encouraging students to consider the feasibility in their school or community organization.

**C.** Share with the students these other possibilities. [Note: You may wish to adopt one or more of the activities as a class project.]

**1. Join a community group** doing something about hunger and/or the rights of the child at home or on a national or international level.
**a) Contact Church World Service**, your denominational hunger/rights office, or other volunteer agencies for suggestion on how to raise funds for their efforts. Church World Service has 25 regional offices located in communities throughout the U.S. For information on the regional office nearest you contact:

*Office of Community Outreach,*
*Church World Service*
*P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515*
*(219) 264-3102*

**b) Contact InterAction** for a brochure listing the names and addresses of volunteer organizations working on the problem of world hunger and rights of the child.

*InterAction*
*200 Park Avenue South,*
*New York, NY 10003*
*(212) 777-8210*

**2. Find out about a food pantry, soup kitchen or child-care center** in your community and volunteer your services.

**3. Investigate hunger, poverty and child rights in your own community.** Who are the people most affected near you? Invite those working with poor people to speak to your class.

**4. Educate others:**

*"Sometimes I look around me and see that we're becoming more and more self-centered, pre-occupied with money and material things. When I see that happening to kids I get sad. We children should try not to adopt the ways of adults. Sometimes kids say to me 'Don't you think it would be better if they just dropped the bomb?' The only thing I can say is 'I think it would be better to do something about it.'"* —Hilary Whelan, U.S.A., age 17

**In school** – Arrange assemblies featuring films or speakers; develop a children's rights team or hunger education team to visit other classrooms or schools in the district; create posters for display, recommend books or magazine subscriptions for purchase by your school library. (See Additional Resources Section for films, videos, magazines, and books.)

**In your community** – Visit local civic groups, e.g., Elks, Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions clubs, to make presentations; place posters in local stores; urge your religious group or club, e.g., Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, to arrange special programs.

5. **Sponsor a feast-or-famine meal** at your school, club or house of worship. Get reservations in advance and prepare rice and beans for two-thirds of the guests, and steak, potatoes, vegetables, dessert, and drink for the other third. After the meal, discuss world hunger with the parents and identify ways in which you can do something. This meal could also prompt discussion about nutrition, and how the world's resources (land, water, etc.) are used to grow food. Is the goal to have everyone in the world eat steak? Note that rice and beans are a good protein source. Compare how much land it takes to grow grain to produce animal protein vs. grain for human consumption. See *Diet for a Small Planet*, by Frances Moore Lappe as a source for discussion.

6. **Organize a "Read for Children" program** in which students find sponsors for a week of reading. The sponsors pledge money for every minute of uninterrupted reading the students undertake at night. Try additional Resources Section for suggested readings if you want to specify hunger or children's rights related topics. The money raised by the class or school can then be donated to a group fighting hunger or working for children's rights.

7. **Organize a "Fast for Hunger" at school.** Have students donate the money normally spent on lunch to a project to help the hungry. During the specified lunch time, organize speakers, discussion groups, or films on hunger projects.

8. **Organize a Thanksgiving food drive** for the hungry in your community.

9. **Write to your representatives** urging them to work toward increasing food and development aid to the hungry people of the world and to support ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

*Congressperson* _____
*US House of Representatives*
*Washington, D.C. 20515*

*Senator* _____
*US Senate Office Building*
*Washington, D.C. 20510*

*President* _____
*The White House*
*Washington, D.C. 20500*

10. **Hold a debate.** Suggested topics include:
Are food aid and development aid the same?
Do children need special rights and protections above and beyond those already granted to adults?

11. **Change your patterns of consumption.** Don't waste food. Give up, even for a short time, some luxury purchase, e.g., candy, soda, and donate the money saved to a hunger organization. Evaluate the consumption patterns at your school.

12. **Write to local papers** urging them to cover issues of hunger and children's rights. Write a letter to the editor in your local paper sharing your perspective on the issues. Write an article on hunger and children's rights for your school or community organization newspaper or newsletter.

# Signs of Hope

Students CAN make a difference. We list here just a few examples of the energy, imagination and feisty determination of your fellow students around the United States. Together these examples, and the many we could not list, form a powerful mosaic of compassionate action. What piece might you add to this picture?

### Organizing a City Wide Conference

Students at several Chicago high schools joined a Church World Service Regional Office and an association of teachers to host "Changing Course on Planet Earth: Justice For People in Partnership with the Earth." Over 600 students in the Chicago metropolitan area attended. Planning is under way for next year's event.

### Organizing a School Club

At St. Joseph's high school in South Bend, Indiana, students concerned about hunger created their own club, modestly called the Hunger Abolition Corps. Over several years they have held school assemblies on issues related to hunger, sponsored fundraising events for both international and domestic hunger, and encouraged teachers to address these issues in their classrooms. From a membership of five it has grown to become the largest non-athletic extra-curricular activity in the school.

### Rafting for Peace

High School students on the West Coast of the United States joined with Soviet counterparts in a unique experiment in international cooperation–rafting the Grand Canyon. Sponsored by Project Raft, based in San Francisco, this represents one of many efforts to meet, link and work with students from different cultures, perspectives and races.

### Demonstrating for Justice

The Los Angeles Students' Coalition, in addition to working to help the homeless and farm workers in their community, organized a demonstration in support of child victims of apartheid in South Africa. Twenty-seven students protested in a Beverly Hills office building which housed the South African Consulate. After effectively closing down the building for 3 days, the students were joined by 1000 other students in a march against the unfair treatment of children in South Africa.

### Recycling to Help the Homeless

Middle School students at Friends School of Baltimore have combined saving the environment and helping the homeless. Students organized an on-going aluminum can recycling project. Almost 2 tons of cans were recycled and 80% of the student body took part in the effort. All proceeds were sent to a local housing coalition which build homes for the homeless.

*"It seems to me like this age, 15 years old, is when you really start thinking about things, thinking about your life, and it's good to feel you can do something about the things you don't agree with."*
—Regina Hunter, age 15

# Part Four: Additional Resources

### Sources for Data:

*Black and White in America: Key Facts.* Washington, D.C.: Children's Defense Fund, 1985.

*Children, 1990, A Report Card, Briefing Book, and Action Primer.* Washington, D.C.: Children's Defense Fund, 1990.

*Hunger 1990: A Report on the State of World Hunger.* Washington, D.C.: Bread for the World Institute on Hunger & Development, 1990.

Kidron, Michael and Ronald Segal. *The New State of the World.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987.

Sewell, John W. and Stuart K. Tucker, ed. *Growth, Exports, and Jobs in a Changing World Economy, Agenda 1988.* New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988.

Sivard, Ruth Leger. *World Military and Social Expenditures 1989.* Washington, D.C.: World Priorities, 1989.

*The State of the World's Children, 1990.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

*World Development Report 1989.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

### Magazines

*New Internationalist.* Monthly. Address: New Internationalist, 113 Atlantic Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

*UNESCO Chronicle.* Monthly. Address: UNIPUB, 205 E. 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017.

*World Eagle.* Monthly (10 issues). Address: World Eagle, 64 Washburn Ave., Wellesley, MA 02181. $30.95/yr.

*World Press Review.* Monthly. Address: World Press Review, Subscription Department, Box 915, Farmingdale, NY 11737.

### Audiovisuals

**Note: All A-V materials cited are available at no charge from Church World Service, Film Library, P.O. Box 968, 28606 Phillips St, Elkhart, Indiana 46515. Tel: (219) 264-3102. A listing of other films is available from the same address.**

*America's Children: Poorest in a Land of Plenty* (52 min./VHS)
Author Maya Angelou narrates this insightful examination of the many areas in which the needs of children in the U.S. are being overlooked. (M.S.or H.S.)

*An African Recovery* (28 min./VHS)
Rural people and development workers are tailoring solutions to local needs and minimizing the risk of repeating the tragedy that ravaged the Sahel in the early and mid-80s. (H.S.)

*The Business of Hunger* (28 min./film, VHS)
Some multinational corporations acquire land in the Third World and grow crops for export, while the local people go hungry. Includes actions suggestions. (H.S.)

*The Challenge to End Hunger* (20 min./VHS of slides)
People from the Third World add their voices to those of Food First analysts in encouraging viewers to recognize and confront the systemic causes of hunger. (H.S.)

*Children of Apartheid* (49 min./VHS)
Walter Cronkite reports on the fate of thousands of black children under South Africa's state of emergency. Interviews with Rosanne, daughter of President P.W. Botha, and Zinzi, daughter of Nelson and Winnie Mandela, reveal vastly differing experiences and differing perspectives on apartheid. (M.S. or H.S.)

*Child Survival Revolution* (12 min./film, VHS, 3/4in.)
Low-cost, highly effective primary health care for children is now available thanks to improved technology and community-based efforts. (M.S. or H.S.)

*Global Poverty* (18 min./VHS)
The hunger problem is really the poverty problem, and food aid is not usually the solution. To make a difference, the people affected must be involved in planning. The Grameen Bank in Bangladesh is a grassroots solution that is making a difference. (M.S.or H.S.)

*Hope is the Last Thing to Die* (26 min./VHS)
The stories and struggles of Brazil's street children to survive in a hostile, sometimes violent environment.

Describes their daily routine, also examines the larger economic issues that push families to the edge and beyond.

*The Politics of Food: A Question of Aid*
(20 min./VHS)
A comparison of Bangladesh and the Indian state of Kerala illustrates alternative approaches to the challenges of development–food, health, education, employment.(H.S.)

*The Politics of Food: Sharing the Land* (20 min./VHS)
Rapid industrial expansion in Brazil has not trickled down to most Brazilians. Solutions to the problems of Third World debt and human poverty are essential. (H.S.)

*The Politics of Food: The Avoidable Famine*
(20 min./VHS)
Sudan is not without food; people have lost the means to buy it. Changes in farming methods have affected both the economy and the society. (H.S.)

*The Politics of Food: The Food Machine*
(20 min./VHS)
An introduction to the global effect of agribusiness and the causes and effects of the farm crisis in the US and Sudan. (H.S.)

*The Politics of Food: The Hunger Business*
(20 Min./VHS)
A close look at a large grain-trading multinational reveals the ways in which trade of agricultural products affects wealthy nations and poor ones. (H.S.)

*Remember Me* (15 min./film, VHS)
Poignant vignettes of children from around the world. (M.S. or H.S.)

*Time Out* (18 min./VHS)
Middle school students discover some surprising facts about hunger in this imaginative film. (M.S.)

*Trees of Hope* (20 min./film, VHS)
In Africa, the extensive use of firewood has led to deforestation. The village wood lot project in Niger offers hope for the land and for the people who depend on wood for fuel. (M.S. or H.S.)

*With These Hands* (33 min./film, VHS) and
*Man-Made Famine* (50 min. version/VHS)
Lack of support for Africa's women farmers may be a major cause of food shortages. Three women, from Burkina Faso, Kenya, and Zimbabwe, tell their stories and expose the problem and some possible solutions. (M.S. or H.S.)

*Young Peacemakers* (20 min./VHS)
A teenager learns from others what young people around the U.S. are doing to improve the lives of others.(M.S. or H.S.)

### Books and Curriculum

Castelle, Kay. *In the Child's Best Interest, A Primer on the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 3r ed. New York: Defense for Children International, 1990.

Ennew, Judith and Brian Milne. *The Next Generation, Lives of Third World Children*. Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1990.

*Food for All: Teaching Against Hunger*. New York: Global Perspectives in Education, Intercom #102.

Franz, Del. *Exploring the Third World: Development in Africa, Asia, and Latin America*. New York: The American Forum, 1987.

Jupp, Michael. *Children Under Apartheid, A Report to the United Methodist Church on Conditions Facing Children in South Africa*. New York: Defense for Children International-USA, 1987.

*Make a World of Difference: Creative Activities for Global Learning*. Office on Global Education, Baltimore, MD. Friendship Press, 1990.

McCuen, Gary. *World Hunger and Social Justice*. Ideas in Conflict Series. Hudson, WI: GEM Publications, 1986. (Available from GEM Publications, 411 Mallilieu Dr., Hudson, WI 54016.

Rubin. *Food First Curriculum*. San Francisco: Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1984.

*Teaching Development Issues*. Manchester: Development Education Project, 1986.

van Noord, Jos. *They Say Peace is Nice. What the Children of Lebanon Think about Fourteen Years of War*. UNICEF, 1988.

Williams, Sonja. *Exploding the Hunger Myths, A High School Curriculum*. San Francisco: Institute for Food and Development, 1987.

## Resources From the Office on Global Education

Please Prepay Orders. Prices below reflect printing costs only.

| Quantity | Order No. | | Amount |
|---|---|---|---|
| _____ | AV 19 | **Hunger Hotline Revisited: Global Food Crisis**<br>17-minute color filmstrip with pulsed cassette tape, script and study guide. | $10.00 _____ |
| | | **Children Hungering for Justice**<br>Two 1-hour sessions on world hunger and children's rights for entry level learner, available for grades: | |
| | _____ K-4 ED 9160 | _____ 5-8 ED 9161 | _____ 9-12 ED 9162 $3.00 ea. _____ |
| _____ | ED 8306 | **Child of the Universe**<br>4-minute slide show with pulsed tape. A reflection on the oneness of the human family. Song-text: Desiderata. Upbeat, moving, meditative. | $20.00 _____ |
| _____ | ED 8607 | **No More Separate Futures**<br>9-minute slide show with pulsed tape and script. An exploration of issues that demand a global perspective. Factual data based on thought-provoking questions. | $20.00 _____ |
| _____ | ED 10 | **World Hunger: Asking the Right Questions**<br>Global Education Reprint by Susan George | One free sample. Bulk price: 1-10, 50¢ each. Over 10, 35¢ ea. _____ |
| _____ | | **Annual CWS Global Calendar**<br>Large full-color calendar (10-1/2" x 24") with prize-winning photos of life in developing countries. Also includes information on global issues such as food production, appropriate technology, water and health. | $16.00 _____<br>Available fall of each year for the following year. |
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| _____ | ED 9044 Facts: Hunger: Myths and Realities | _____ | ED 9050 Facts: Debt |
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## Global Education
## "A World's-Eye View"

Global education or education for global justice is a process which helps people understand the conditions of hunger, poverty and oppression and why these conditions exist and persist. Global education arouses and nurtures in individuals a commitment to envision and actively promote a more just, sustainable, participatory and thus, human global environment.

### Office on Global Education

The CWS Office on Global Education is mandated to inform and sensitize the U.S. public about the root causes of hunger, the limitations of global resources and the interdependence of all people. The Office works in a collaborative and cooperative style, animating and supporting existing initiatives in global education in the U.S., as well as providing educational programming.

Church World Service is the relief, refugee resettlement and development agency of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. CWS cooperates with and acts on behalf of 31 Protestant and Orthodox communions. Its overseas work is undertaken by local agencies, usually church-related, in more than 70 countries around the world. Thus CWS is a link in a people-to-people network of U.S. churches and overseas colleague agencies working in partnership to help people help themselves.

### Center for Teaching International Relations

The Center for Teaching International Relations (CTIR), affiliated with the Graduate School of International Studies and School of Education at the University of Denver, was founded in 1968 to help classroom teachers become more proficient at teaching global, social science, and educational skill topics. The Center's main objective is to improve the teaching of precollegiate global and international studies. CTIR offers graduate courses in education; conducts teacher inservice workshops; offers travel and retreat courses with credit during the summer months and other vacation periods; develops, publishes, and disseminates curriculum materials; and offers consultative services to schools. Although national in scope, the Center focuses its attention on a twelve-state area, including the Rocky Mountain and Great Plains regions.

**For listing of other educational resources write to:**

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Baltimore, Maryland 21218
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